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SOURCE Monitored Broadcasts

CPW Report No. 36--USSR

(May 13-26, 1952)

SUMMARY

There is a mounting volume of collective letters to Stalin from various industries and construction projects containing familiar promises to rectify existing shortcomings and/or multiply the successes already achieved. PRAVDA hints that such pledges are easier made than kept, and urges far greater efforts toward their materialization. Some regional transmitters still echo PRAVDA's recent editorial reminding their listeners that the so-called Socialist custody of property and equipment by individual workers is a thing of the past, and centralized responsibility is again the order of the day. Weaknesses in the Building Materials, Communications, and Coal industries get some attention, as does public welfare.

In the field of ideology, attention is called to the "voice of public opinion" (golos obshchestvennosti) which is said to be neglected too often. The Ukrainians are again reminded that for their present state of "complete unification" they are heavily indebted to their "beloved elder brother", the Great Russian Nation. The Soviet State and Party "superstructure" is to continue its existence so long as the non-Soviet world does, according to Prof. Stepanyan.

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INDUSTRY

Promise and Fulfillment--PRAVDA still features prominently the various collective letters to Stalin from industries, enterprises, and entire Republics promising speedier work and greater achievements. Although most of the editorial references to such letters are phrased to convey the impression that they are "spontaneous" and "unanimous", occasional implicit admissions throw considerable doubt on these descriptive terms. Thus PRAVDA (May 17) referring to the pledges made by Azerbaijan industrial workers, intimates that promises alone are not enough, since the gap between them and fulfillment is often too great to be bridged:

It is the duty of the Party, trade union, administrative and Komsomol organizations to secure the fulfillment of the pledges made by the working people...

The same paper reveals on May 23 that in a number of places collective pledges are regarded as routine work and are taken so lightly by the appropriate officials that they do not even bother to see whether they are carried out:

Pledges alone do not insure success...This fact is, however, frequently and regrettably being overlooked. As a result, important pledges fail to be implemented.

Some indication as to the motivation of the collective pledges is contained in most of the mentioned letters themselves. Thus, in the first of the 3 typical letters cited below the workers of the South Ukrainian and Crimean ~~coals~~, promising Stalin to rush the construction work to an early successful completion (May 13), concede that they have not been doing so well:

We realize that with the enormous daily assistance rendered to us by the Party, the Government and the entire country, we should and could work better. There are still many grave shortcomings in our work.

Russian version:

My soznayem, chto pri toy ogromnoy pomoshchi, kotoruyu povsednevno okazyvayut nam partiya, pravitelstvo i vsya strana, my dolzhny i mozhem rabotat luchshe. V nashey rabote est eshche mnogo nedostatkov.

The Georgian SSR miners similarly admit (May 15) that they could have done much better if they had made the effort:

We realize, however, that these successes could have been considerably greater had we made better use of the resources at our disposal.

Russian version:

Odnako my soznayem, chto eti uspekhi mogli byt znachitelno bolshimi, esli by my luchshe ispolzovali imeyushchiesya v nashem rasporiazhenii rezervy.

The letter from the Volga-Kama River navigation workers (May 21) also refers to last year's plan failure in addition to the present shortcomings, and the workers of the Building Materials industry admit (May 19) that the industry is still not working at full capacity.

At least two of the regional transmitter monitored persist in their denunciation of the old practice of "Socialist custody" (Sotsialisticheskaya okhrannost) whereby individual workers "volunteered" to assume personal responsibility for the maintenance of specified property and equipment units. This trend was suddenly reversed by a recent PRAVDA editorial which referred to that practice as "erroneous and harmful" (oshibochnaya i vrednaya) and declared that centralized control was the only solution. Diffusion of responsibility, and paper intimated, made it easy for industrial and agricultural executives to shirk their own responsibilities for physical properties.

The tendency to make individuals accountable for the "Socialist maintenance" of property and machinery, declares MOLOT editorially on May 15, "is still springing up." This "incorrect" practice, the paper continues undermines the creative initiative of the masses and distracts their attention from the real problems of Socialist competition. KAZAKHSTANSKAYA PRAVDA (May 24) refers to Socialist custody as a "perversion of Socialist competition principles", and calls for an immediate end to that practice. That corrupting influence, the paper asserts, has penetrated the Republic's industrial and transportation enterprises, collective and State farms, and machine-tractor stations. To keep Socialist competition on a higher level and to do away with the bureaucratic habits of the administrative and executive personnel, "all these and other perversions... must be complete eliminated."

A Home Service report of May 13 quotes IZVESTIA as saying that the building materials industry is still lagging "far behind" the growing demands of the national economy. Asserting that both the quality and variety of the industry's products still leave much to be desired, the paper urges larger cuts in production costs and an overall increase of output "by two or three times." ORLOVSKAYA PRAVDA (May 18) says that some of the oblast's largest building trusts "are working considerably worse than last year," and blames such performance on the prevailing anti-mechanization tendencies among executives and professional workers alike:

The slow tempo of building and the high building costs are due to poor use being made of machines... Minor mechanization and vertical transport are virtually not applied... Individual professional workers prefer... manual processes and in every way disdain the use of machines... Unfortunately, these anti-mechanization tendencies are not finding due resistance.

Bad labor organization, an object of unceasing official criticism in industry and agriculture, is said to be contributing much to the already unenviable record of the housing construction trusts, but the point is not amplified. Pursuing the subject in context of general performance the editorial points out that no number of pledges under such circumstances on the part of the industry will improve the situation. The Orel building industry itself is, in fact, a case in point:

Two months have passed. How are the undertaken obligations being fulfilled at the present time? Far from satisfactorily. The April building plan for the oblast was fulfilled 67.5%.

The Vinnitsa Oblast communications services apparently need a great deal of prodding, according to VINNITSKA PRAVDA (May 16), since their chief task--"service to the population"--has not been successfully solved. The paper suggests more criticism and self-criticism as one of the important measures for eliminating the unnamed existing shortcomings. It also calls upon the local press to help straighten matters out by expanding its "enlightenment work" among the workers. The oblast postal, telegraph, telephone, and radio workers are referred to as derelict in their duties, but this and other references to the communications services are on the whole vague and lack specificity.

A broadcast from Stalino (May 23) quotes RADYANSKA DONETSHCHINA as excoriating the lukewarm attitude of certain officials toward the new "Shakhtyer" and "Gornyak" type coal combines. Despite the "positive results" brought by the first test of the new machines, says the report, the use made of them at most shafts is extremely unsatisfactory. "At many shafts, coal seams unsuitable for combine operations have been 'allotted for mechanized work' with the inevitable disappointing results. Combine brigades have not been selected, and no overall control over the operation of the new combines and their adaptability to various methods of coal mining is exercised. Recalling the decision of the 18th Communist Party Congress calling for a qualitative improvement of the industrial output, MOLOT insists that the lunking workers who are 'dishonoring the Soviet factory trade mark' be severely punished. Their poor handiwork, it is claimed, is still very much

in evidence in the defective furniture, flimsy footwear, and a variety of other consumer goods offered for sale. The "race for quantity production", at the expense of quality, is still on and it is high time to put an end to it. The editorial quotes the head of the oblast quality control department as complaining that the quality of the coal supplied to the consumers has dropped far below State specifications. The Bogurayev Coal Trust alone, he declares, lost over 6,000,000 rubles through lower quality coal in the first quarter alone. The Rostov Automobile Trust and its repair shops, it appears, have also "forgotten" what quality means. All too often, motors overhauled by the Trust's shops are defective, and the repair jobs have to be done all over again. That is all because technological rules are constantly violated and "bungler's work under favorable conditions" (v l'gote chuvstvuyut sebya brakodely).

A summarized report from Tashkent (May 21) speaks vaguely of the "many enterprises" which failed to fulfill their 4-months' plan, thus depriving the State of a "substantial quantity" of production. No further details are given nor are the failing enterprises named, but the report adds that the oblast industrial conference convened to consider the matter adopted a resolution to encourage Socialist competition among the industry workers of Tashkent, Samarkand, and Chirchik. It is also pointed out that the Tashkent industrial enterprises have now "assumed the obligation" (prinysali na sebya obyazatelstvo) to complete the annual production plan by Dec. 16, to save 45,000,000 rubles by reducing production costs and to raise labor productivity 7% above plan.

IDEOLOGICAL AFFAIRS

Cultural Chauvinism, A Great Russian Privilege: A long PRAVDA article by Chernichenko (May 17, not broadcast) reveals inferentially that not all the Ukrainian theatres are very keen about replacing Ukrainian stage production by Russian classics on their repertoires. The case is cited of the Shchors Dramatic Theatre in Zaporozhye which, according to the author, RADYANSKA UKRAINA had exposed as deviating from the fixed ideological line. The oblast Party secretary Artyukhovsky, instead of cooperating with the newspaper in its ideological scrutiny of the stage workers, is said to have pleaded with it to withhold criticism until the actors are re-educated to the prevailing official line:

For the past 20 years the Zaporozhye Shchors Theatre has been nurtured exclusively on plays of prerevolutionary Ukrainian bourgeois life and folk lore. The oblast Party Committee is now taking steps to re-educate the theatrical collective to present Russian classical plays and those by Soviet authors. This is a very difficult, tedious job...

Russian version:

Zaporozhsky teatr imeni Shchorsa v techenii 20 let vospityvalsya na pyesakh iskluchitelno dorevolutsionnogo, ukrainskogo burzhuaznogo byta i folklora. V nastoyashchee vremya obkom partii prinimayet mery po perevospitanii teatralnogo kollektiva dlya postanovki pyes russkoy klassiki i sovetских avtorov. Eto rabota ochen trudnaya, kropotlivaya...

Chernichenko is particularly indignant about the oblast Party's resistance to the press exposure of the "straying" theatrical workers: "The ~~soothing RADYANSKA UKRAINA~~ criticism of the Ukrainian stage production was disregarded by the Party Committee." The interesting point to be noted here, however, is that while prerevolutionary Ukrainian plays are officially frowned upon, Russian classics, which are also pre-revolutionary, are encouraged on the Ukrainian stage.

The love-thy-elder-brother theme is discussed editorially by RADYANSKA UKRAINA on May 24. The Ukrainians are reminded that 7 years ago, on May 24, 1945, Stalin drank "a famous toast to the Great Russian people" referring to them as "the most outstanding nation" of all the nations making up the Soviet Union. The paper goes further than that, however,

by adding that "world culture owes its biggest achievements to the Russian Nation" because Russia is the Fatherland of Leninism which is itself the greatest cultural achievement in the world. Without the Great Russians, it is claimed, the Ukraine could not possibly be what it is today:

It was with the political, military, economic, and cultural help of the Russian Nation that the Ukrainian Nation attained its eternal dreams about its own State, the unification of all its lands, the building of its own Soviet Ukrainian Socialist Republic...

Ukrainian version:

U vsiy svoiy borotbi z odvazhnym rossiyskim narodom, vspirayuchys na yoho nezmynnu politychnu, voyennu, hospodarchu, kulturnu dopomohu, piyshov ukrainskiy narod do zdaisnynnya svoikh vikovykh mriy pro svoyu derzhavu, pro obyednannye usikh svoikh zemel, pobudovav svoyu ukrainsku radyansku sotsialistychnu respubliku...

The great Russian people, the editorial implies, have deserved the eternal gratitude of the Ukrainians, and it is only fitting that such gratitude be expressed in terms of closer friendship:

Constantly strengthen the friendly ties with the Great Russian people!--this is what the Ukrainian Nation calls for and demands of its sons. The Ukrainian Nation expresses its unbreakable unity with the Russian Nation and bends all its efforts toward the achievement of the same great aims to which the Great Russian Nation devotes all its ideas and strength.

Ukrainian version:

Nezminno krepity druzhbu z velykim rossiyskim narodom, do tsyoho zaklikaye, tsyoho vyamahaye ukrainskiy narod vid usikh svoikh syniv. Ukrainskiy narod vyrazhayesvoyu nerozrivnu yednist z rossiyskim x narodom, spryamovuyuchi usi sily svoi na zdaisnennya tykhzhe velykikh tseliv yakim prisyadchuye i pomysli i sily svoi rossiyskiy narod...

The ideological purity of the stage, this time in the RSFSR, is also discussed at some length by MOLOT on May 18. More than 5 years have passed since the Central Committee of the Party fixed the ideological and artistic standard of plays to be produced, the paper declares, but ideologically valueless plays "continue to be produced on the stage." Most of the oblast dramatic theatres are said to be behind the times in their performance. Even the famous Maxim Gorki Theatre "seldom puts on good Soviet plays." Among the stage plays "not recommended" but still widely publicized are "Thirtieth Anniversary", "Gypsy Baron", and Inke's, "Silver Isle", which goes so far as to "distort the vital truth of the Soviet way of life." Some of the theatres do not even have a Party organization of their own to help them in their ideological orientation, the paper complains. There is little reference to the oblast playwrights and their activities beyond the passing remark that the Writers' Union has shown a "perfunctory interest" in the drama. The writers of the Don region, in fact, have not produced a single play "in recent years."

PRAVDA discloses (May 20) that serious ideological errors, some of them politically harmful, have been found in many books published by the State Publishing House of Legal Literature (Gosudarstvennoye Izdatelstvo Yuridicheskoy Literatury). No specific instances are mentioned, however. A number of authors employed by that House, the editorial says, do not possess the necessary knowledge or background for their work, and are therefore unable to find the "correct" solution for the problems at hand.

Frequently, the paper continues, the preparation of literary publications is entrusted to incompetent and even unscrupulous (nedobrosovestnie) people. Such was the case, for example, with the publication of poet Demyan Bedny's collected works some of which have been distorted to such an extent as to suggest "a liberal-bourgeois falsification of the text" (liberalno-burzhuaznaya falsifikatsia teksta). These perversions would not have occurred had not the Goslitizdat and Voenizdat publishing houses assigned politically unscrupulous editors to do the job. The Chkalov and Chita oblast publishing houses are said to have committed serious blunders in the publication of Mikhailov's works, but the respective oblast Party Committees have "glossed over" (proshli mimo) those mistakes. All this, the editorial concludes, points to the necessity of improving the leadership of the local publishing organizations, and such improvement must be effected by the appropriate Party Committees. The latter are also urged to look deeper into the activities of the publishers and to "keep a sharp eye on the ideological slant" (strogo sledit za ideologicheskoy vyderzhannostyu) of the published books.

"Public opinion" (obshchestvennost) in Kirghiz SSR, says Lukin in a dispatch from Frunze carried by PRAVDA (May 22, not broadcast) is far from satisfied with the activities of the Republic's publishing organizations. Their performance is said to be "far behind the growing cultural demands" of the working people. The same applies to a number of local newspapers, among them KZYL KIRGHIZSTAN. It is revealed that a language text book (khrestomatiya) recently prepared for the 9th and 10th classes of the middle schools is replete with "serious errors and distortions". As "suggested" by the Central Committee of the Kirghiz Communist Party, a revised and corrected (pererabotannaya i ispravlennaya) edition will soon be published. There is no specific reference to the mentioned errors and distortions beyond the assertion that they were made by "casual people who had run afoul of the law in other places" (ludi sluchainie, proshtra-fivshiesya v drugikh mestakh).

Lukin accuses the Kirghiz State Publishing House (Kirgosizdat) of violating the Bolshevik principle of personnel selection by hiring people of doubtful academic and moral qualities. The former editor of KZYL KIRGHIZSTAN, for example, who had been dismissed from his post and expelled from the Party for moral turpitude (moralno-bytovoye razlozhenie) has recently been appointed editor of the mentioned Publishing organization. The shortage of qualified translators, it is asserted, often results in serious shortcomings and errors in the Republican newspapers, magazines and other publications. Although the Central Committee of the Kirghiz Communist Party had provided measures to alleviate that shortage, nothing has as yet been done about implementing the Party's decision.

Socialism Versus Communism: The similarities and differences between the two systems are discussed by Prof. Stepanyan in a talk for the home audience on May 23. To begin with, neither can be achieved without a social revolution since any social order based on class antagonism makes a revolution "inevitable." Socialism and Communism, he says, have the same ideological basis, and the "obligation" to work is one of their common features. Under Socialism "State control over the amount of work required to satisfy consumption" appears to be necessary, whereas under Communism all controls will be lifted and public opinion will serve as a deterrent to "all attempts to disregard...the basic rules of coexistence." Public opinion is said to perform a useful function "even now", since it is expressed in the form of criticism and self-criticism. One of the basic differences between Socialism and Communism is, in the words of Lenin, "the lack of political maturity" still prevailing under the former system. Another, is the dual system of public ownership of the means of production, State and co-operative, which under Communism will merge into a single form of Communist ownership.

Referring to the future of the Soviet State and its "guide" (rukovoditel), the Communist Party, Stepanyan debunks the prevailing misconception of the State "withering away" when an era of Communism has been ushered in. This "indivisible political superstructure" (nedelimaya politicheskaya nadstroyka) -- the powerful State and the Party -- he says, will continue as long as the non-Communist world does, with the Party still playing a leading part:

The leading position of our Party...will remain throughout the whole period of the struggle for Communism, and will cease to exist only under the conditions of a well-advanced Communist society victorious on a global scale.

Russian version:

Vedushchaya rol' nashey partii...okhranitsya v techenii vsego perioda borby za kommunizm i okonchatelno otpadet tolko v usloviakh razvernutogo kommunisticheskogo obshchestva, pobedivshego v mirovom masshtabe.

PUBLIC WELFARE

The PRAVDA editorial criticism (May 14) of the insufficient attention given to the people's welfare facilities, particularly rest homes, sanatoria, and vacation resorts, is echoed by a number of regional transmitters. A report from Stalino (May 16) speaks of the "impermissible indifference" to the organization of workers' rest homes displayed by certain Party and Soviet officials. In some towns, it is asserted, "culture and rest" facilities are not made available to the workers until the middle of summer while in others they are sometimes not opened at all. This "bad habit", as the report terms it, is particularly evident in Yenakievo, Kramatorsk, and Gorlovka.

A ZVYAZDA editorial (Minsk, May 21) says that although Byelorussia has adequate vacation facilities on its territory, the administration of sanatoria, rest homes, sanitation, medical attention and transportation "leaves a lot to be desired." No further details are offered but Party, Soviet, and trade union organizations are urged to "eliminate the shortcomings at once." The "problem of orderliness and development", according to RYBYANSKA UKRAJINA (May 22), is not receiving much attention in many Ukrainian towns. The paper reveals that the Republic's 4-month plan for capital repairs of living accommodations has not been fulfilled, and one housing situation is particularly bad in Nikolayev, Drogobych, and in "some other" oblasts. The planned construction of bathing and laundering facilities in Slavyansk and Stalino, for example, has never been started because some of the construction organizations simply "refused to do it." Soviet officials are said to be taking little interest in the proper maintenance of urban transportation facilities which "in some towns...work badly and at a loss." Street-and-yard cleaning has been neglected or "badly organized" in Odessa, Drogobych, and other cities.

KAZAKHSTANSKAYA PRAVDA (May 23) deplores the lack of interest in summer rest programs for the vacationing workers on the part of the trade union councils. The suitable natural conditions around Kamenogorsk and Semipalatinsk, situated on river banks, are not utilized for holiday resorts, and in East Kazakhstan oblast the organization of holiday resorts is "generally unsatisfactory." A report from Tbilisi (May 25) quotes ZARYA VOSTOKA as calling for more attention to the material, living and cultural services for the population. The "numerous shortcomings still existing in that field" must be eradicated, and the needs of the population should be "within the constant field of vision" of the Party and Soviet organizations concerned. The editorial cites no specific shortcomings but "suggests" that the officials catering to the people's daily needs should be "educated in the spirit of stricter observance of State discipline," and an honest and conscientious attitude toward their obligations.

MISCELLANEOUS

A TASS transmission to Europe (May 14) tells of the exhibition--"American-British Intervention in Esthonia 1918-20"--recently opened in Tallin. The exhibits are said to show the "never-ending flood" of guns, tanks, aircraft and other war paraphernalia to Esthonia from America and Britain who were preparing an attack on Petrograd. Shown also is the "brutal suppression" of the workers' opposition to the interventionists that broke out on Sarema and Muhu islands on February 16, 1919.

The popular belief that hot blasting in high and cupola furnaces was first applied in the British metallurgical industry in 1829 is all wrong, according to a Home Service report of May 22. According to some Leningrad research scientists, that method was first evolved by the Russians at the St. Petersburg Alexandrov Works in 1821.